

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed June 22, 2004. Claim 1 has been amended and claims 6 and 7 have been added. The amendments to claim 1 are supported at page 7, paragraph 0046 and page 8, paragraph 0052. New claims 6 and 7 are supported at Figures 3 and 5, and at page 8, paragraph 0055 through page 9, paragraph 0058. Accordingly, no new subject matter has been added. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Takeichi et al. (U.S. 4,966,082). This rejection is traversed.

Claim 1 recites a vehicle floor structure comprising, among other things, left and right floor frame members, a plurality of crossmembers, a floor panel mounted to the left and right floor frame members, the floor panel including a front end portion connected to a front crossmember and a rear end portion connected to a rear crossmember, and a corrugated sheet having left and right side portions connected to the left and right floor frame members, and front and rear edge portions connected to the front and rear crossmembers. At least the above features are not disclosed in Takeichi et al.

In particular, Takeichi et al. fail to disclose a corrugated sheet that is joined to the left and right floor frame members and also to front and rear crossmembers. Instead, Takeichi et al. disclose a corrugated plate 14 disposed between the upper and lower plates 12 and 13. The upper plate 12, the corrugated plate 14, and the lower plate 13 are joined together by spot welding so as to form the floor member 11 of a one-piece configuration. The floor member 11 is joined to the sills 5 and the body bolsters 8. In this instance, the upper plate 12 and the lower plate 13 of the floor member 11 are joined to the sills 5 and the bolsters 8, while the corrugated plate is joined to neither the sills 5 nor the bolsters 8. See Takeichi et al. at column 3, lines 55-63. Accordingly, Takeichi et al. fail to anticipate claim 1. New claims 6 and 7 depend from and further limit claim 1; therefore, for at least the same reasons, they are also not anticipated by Takeichi et al.

The outstanding Office Action indicated that claims 2 and 3 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim. Accordingly, claim 2 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of original claim 1. As such, claim 2 is allowable. Claim 3 depends from claim 2; therefore, it is also allowable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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